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MEN OUT OF WORK

—Francis X. Gannor

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by Doris Grumbach

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EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
JAMES FINN
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Drama Critic: RICHARD HAYES; *Movie Critic:* PHILIP T. HARTUNG; *Paris:* ROBERT BARRAT; *Rome:* GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN; *Great Britain:* MICHAEL P. FOGARTY

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

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THE
Commonweal
A Weekly Review of Public Affairs, Literature, and the Arts
THIRTY-SEVENTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

week by week

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC WELFARE

WHATEVER the immediate fate of the present aid-to-education bill, the debate about aid to parochial schools will be with us for some time. When we realize, both as American citizens and as spokesmen for various groups, that the problem is a national problem involving the education of all our children and not the burden and sole responsibility of any single group, we can lift the debate to the level on which it should have been initiated. To date much of what has been said seems to be more the result of conditioned reflex than the outcome of considered reflection.

In spite of the fact that education has been a major topic of national discussion for some years and Federal aid-to-education proposals long preceded the Kennedy Administration, the rush of events seems to have carried most commentators beyond the facts at their disposal and their thinking about what they consider ideal. As a consequence the alignment of forces has fallen into a familiar pattern.

Those who support Federal aid to education do so, of course, with the belief that only with such support will our educational system approach its highest level. This then is the goal that must be kept in mind. Any program that would seem to frustrate that goal should come under the closest scrutiny. So too should any program that would seem to promote some partial interest at the expense of the whole. These are considerations of public policy that must be viewed as such.

Those who concern themselves with issues of Federal aid to education and debate the merits of aid to parochial schools will speak, consciously or not, from within some recognizable tradition. Sometimes this will make communication extremely difficult and only persistent and informed conversation will uncover the real basis of disagreement.

To give only two examples: we find it difficult to grasp the theoretical basis which allowed an editor of one secular magazine to write that "it is the mission of the state to discourage parochial schools," and, further, to say that the state "is itself committed to exerting a secular, unifying, equalitarian force." We were equally disconcerted to read an editorial in a Protestant journal which stated that Federal aid to parochial schools would be sufficient cause for many people to refuse to pay taxes.

NEITHER OF these statements seems to be consistent with the best traditions of American social and political life as we understand them. Each implies a relation between religion, the state and education that is alien to us. The differences are sufficiently great to make agreement on aid to parochial schools seem almost impossible to attain.

But we must return to the central point. Our national educational system needs support. Our country has the means to provide it. Our problem is to bring the two together. If we do not, with all the resources at our disposal, find a satisfactory solution to the problem it will solve itself in a manner that will satisfy no one.

Each group can begin by examining its own commitments and desires. Catholics would do well to ask themselves if they really wish to maintain their school system in its present form. Are the sacrifices they are making to maintain this system out of proportion to the results? And do those very sacrifices make it difficult for them to appreciate the real merits—and the real needs—of their local public schools? Would the gradual exclusion of religion from public schools be inevitable if Catholics were even more dependent on them, or

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would some compromises yet unvoiced be devised? If Federal aid to parochial schools is a question of public policy, is a statement by Catholic bishops the best way to present a Catholic position? And would not arguments based upon parental rights be more compelling if they came from parents?

Other groups have similar questions they can ask themselves. Is it meaningful, for instance, to make a distinction between indoctrination (Catholic schools) and education (public schools)? Do these groups really wish to grant the state primary control over education? Would they be satisfied to see the extensive parochial school system decline in quality relative to public schools, and, possibly, disappear? And, a larger question, would they willingly accept the consequences? Is the exclusion of religion from public schools a satisfactory solution? Is unity so desirable that we cannot unite in paying the price of pluralism? Is conformity so desirable that we cannot bear the burden of diversity?

As a people we are far from finding answers to all these questions. But they plead for answers, and we must consider them before we can rest content with any single position on the immediate question. It is not enough to say that we must support the public schools. Of course we must. But that in itself will not solve our problems.

REVOLUTION IN CUBA

THE CUBAN wheel has turned almost full circle. At this writing, anti-Castro revolutionaries are waging open war on the forces of a feared and hated tyrant and calling upon all Cuban patriots to join with them in the overthrow of their country's oppressor.

Two weeks of intensified sabotage and guerrilla activity—including large-scale bombings in downtown Havana and the defection of three Air Force pilots who bombed and strafed Cuban airfields before fleeing the country in precious B-26's—has culminated now in actual invasion by troops of the Cuban Revolutionary Council. Thus in a little over two years the government of Premier Castro has exhausted the immense store of faith and hope invested in it by the Cuban people and by people and governments all over the world. And once again Cubans are faced by the certainty of suffering and struggle, and by the prospect of a nation torn apart and bleeding.

What will this second "fight for freedom" mean, to the Cubans, to Latin America, to the United States? The immediate answer to this question must be that we do not know, but it is at least possible to be hopeful. While revolutions are volatile and unpredictable things, it appears now that the Revolutionary Council led by Dr. José Miro Cardona is a genuinely democratic movement. If it is successful in driving Premier Castro from power, its regime would not be merely one of opposition, where the outs take the place of the ins. Nor do the Cardona forces represent simply the Right reacting against the Left. The Revolutionary Council has explicitly proclaimed its opposition to the tyranny of former dictator Batista as well as to Dr. Castro, and its announced objective is not to destroy the revolution but to "rescue the revolution so cynically betrayed." In any case, even if a succeeding government should want to, it would seem practically impossible to wipe out the social achievements of the Castro revolution.

As for the repercussions of the anti-Castro invasion in Latin American and inter-American relations, these same observations provide some grounds for optimism. Thus far, Latin American commentators have shown considerable sympathy for the position taken by the Kennedy Administration. Obviously, the anti-Castro forces have received encouragement and help from the U.S., but members of the Organization of American States have for the most part been satisfied by the President's vow that U.S. forces would under no circumstances intervene in the Cuban struggle. Furthermore, Latin Americans have been reassured by the Administration's pledge of support for the "social revolution" appropriated by the Castro regime and by its expression of hostility towards dictatorships of the Right as well as the Left.

All in all, it seems not unreasonable to hope that a free, socially responsible, non-Communist government may be established in Cuba, that the stability and security of the Americas will not be damaged by the effort of doing so, and that in this struggle the United States will manage to escape the stigma of "Yanqui imperialism."

MIGRANTS' PROGRAM

SECRETARY OF LABOR Arthur J. Goldberg has made a series of announcements that forecast better times for the nation's exploited migratory farm workers. For one thing, his department and the Department of Agriculture are now working hand in hand (rather than at cross-purposes, as before). For another, the Administration is opposed

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to any renewal of the Mexican farm labor import program under which over three hundred thousand *braceros* were brought in to work as seasonal farm laborers here last year. As first steps Secretary Goldberg is seeking legislation that will restrict the employment of children, regulate the crew leaders who recruit migratory workers and provide special education and training for these workers and their families. He will not secure this without strong public support.

A recent spot check of migrant workers' camps cited by Mr. Goldberg, and reported in the *Christian Science Monitor*, shows the urgent need for such legislation. It disclosed some 4500 children under sixteen years of age working during school hours. Of these more than half were between ten and thirteen and twenty-one per cent under nine.

INDUCEMENT FOR EXECUTIVES

IN THE STRUGGLE to balance the budget there are recurring efforts to plug tax loopholes. Such efforts promise to be quite pronounced under President Kennedy. One of his intended reforms would withdraw the advantage which taxpayers with incomes from dividends have over compatriots who have only earned income to report. And Senator Gore of Tennessee has introduced a bill which would repeal a 1950 law which, he claims, costs the Federal Government a hundred million dollars in annual revenue.

The Gore bill is aimed at the restricted stock option plan, which for the past ten years has enabled many larger corporations to offer special incentives to top executives. This takes the form of offering these "key employees" opportunities to buy specific amounts of company stock before some future date—at the market price (or for at least ninety-five per cent of the market price) on the day the option is granted. If, as is hoped, the stock then rises in price, the executive has an opportunity to make a nice profit. And if he holds the stock for at least six months before selling, the tax on that profit is on a "capital gains" basis.

The case for this system is frequently argued out in company brochures. From the point of view of the company—and its stockholders—it is a cogent argument. It holds that the number of top executives with the qualifications and willingness to take the risks and responsibilities demanded by competitive modern enterprise is severely limited in America today. Companies are continually bidding for their services. As an inducement to join a corporation in this capacity, "high salaries lose a great deal of their meaning after income taxes are deducted." Hence there is opportunity for greater personal reward for successful managing in profits from stock options. Senator Gore asserts that the process is "clearly designed for the purpose of compensating executives at a low tax rate."

This set-up has doubtless proved advantageous to both company and stockholder. It takes some proving to demonstrate that it serves the national interest in like measure.

COMRADE COSMONAUT

THE SOVIET achievement of successfully orbiting a man in space and recovering him without injury is indeed a great and historic feat, if hardly "the greatest event in the history of mankind," as it was happily described by Pravda.

Many Americans are deeply alarmed at the blow the Soviet space flight will mean to U.S. prestige in the world. Among them are a number of Congressmen, and President Kennedy is sure to be confronted by Congressional demands for an all-out American effort to catch up with the Russians in what has come to be called "the race for space."

Concern over the political as well as scientific implications of the Soviet Union's space achievements is no more than sensible, we think, and a preferable state to the complacency and short-sightedness displayed on this subject by President Eisenhower and his Administration. But at the same time there is not much use, and considerable danger, in panicky efforts to change the present situation overnight. The development of rocket-engines to match the Russians' requires time and the maintenance of steady pressure on the part of our national leadership. Turning on the money spigot will not automatically produce the scientific achievements we want, nor will wild oscillations in our public attitudes, from fear and hysteria to self-satisfied apathy.

President Kennedy has already proposed an 11.8 per cent increase in the Eisenhower space budget for the coming fiscal year. Furthermore, he has ordered heavy concentration within that budget on the development of the bigger rockets we now lack. So long as we can rely on his Administration to be mindful of the need to bolster the strength and reputation of the U.S. in the world—and on the basis of what he has said and done thus far, we think we can—there is little to be accomplished by cries of anguish and alarm.

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ROBERT WELCH & CO.

BY NOW I would have thought that nothing the extremist groups could come up with would surprise me. But I must confess that I was startled by the nature and fervor of the attack on Dwight D. Eisenhower by Robert Welch, the founder of the John Birch Society. I gather that the circulation of Mr. Welch's privately printed book was largely confined to true believers, and I myself have never seen a copy. But if the widely-quoted section on President Eisenhower is any sample, it must be quite a book.

". . . my private belief that Dwight Eisenhower is a dedicated, conscious agent of the Communist conspiracy," Mr. Welch wrote, "is based on an accumulation of detailed evidence so extensive and so palpable that it seems to me to put this conviction beyond any reasonable doubt." So much for Mr. Eisenhower.

Interestingly enough, Harry S. Truman comes off a little better. Unlike Mr. Eisenhower, he and Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as well as both John Foster and Allen Dulles, are not labeled as dedicated, conscious agents of the Communist conspiracy; they were "tools of Communism." In the John Birch set this is, I presume, much better, and I only hope Messrs. Truman and Dulles are able to appreciate the distinction.

Perhaps times have changed, or perhaps the predominantly Republican newspapers around the country resist attacks of this sort on President Eisenhower more than they did on Democratic Harry Truman. Whatever the reasons, Mr. Welch has been confronted with a largely hostile press, and in the face of heavy criticism he has tended to soften his charges against Mr. Eisenhower. Denying that he called Mr. Eisenhower "a card-carrying Communist," Mr. Welch said he "never had that opinion. I never thought it then with firmness enough to publish it or say it in public and I don't today." Here, as far as I can make out, Mr. Welch is saying that he believed the charge just enough to make it privately and not quite enough to make it publicly—a difference that is unlikely to seem overwhelming to most people.

I may be crediting Mr. Welch with more subtlety than he possesses, but there is something very familiar about his technique. Back in the McCarthy era, many people were sidetracked into endless argument about similar, essentially misleading questions. Did the Senator say there were two hundred and twenty card-carrying Communists in the top echelons of the State Department or "only" ninety-six? Was it charged that General Marshall was guilty of treason, or "only" that he presided over the betrayal of China?

If Mr. Welch could bring it off, I suppose he in turn would like to see the country debate a similar question framed by him: was Dwight D. Eisenhowe a dedicated, conscious agent of the Soviet Union o was he "merely" used by the Communists around hir as an unwitting tool? In such a debate, presumably the man who went all the way for John Birch woul hold out for the theory that President Eisenhower be trayed his country with full malice and forethought The moderate (!) would "defend" Mr. Eisenhowe arguing that although his conduct did help the Commu nist cause, it was only because he knew no better

Heaven knows that Dwight Eisenhower needs n defense from me, but this kind of thing is political mad ness and it should be recognized as such. In recen weeks various good-hearted people have come forwar to say a kind word for the John Birch Society's founde This speaks well for their charity, but the point seem to me irrelevant. I am quite willing to presume goo intentions on the part of Robert Welch and his fol lowers, but it should be obvious to one and all tha their line makes rational political debate and judg ment completely impossible.

Ironically, the John Birch Society itself is mos vulnerable to this sort of attack. Suppose yo walked up to me and said you represented an organi zation with these aims: take the United States out c the United Nations (thus helping Khrushchev destro the international organization); resignation by th U.S. from NATO (withdrawal of American troops an missiles from their positions in Europe opposite th Soviet forces); impeachment of the Chief Justice c the United States for unpopular decisions (destructio of an independent judiciary); removal of the long-tim head of the C.I.A. (weakening U.S. intelligence opera tions on both sides of the Iron Curtain). Without, hope, being unduly suspicious, I would not be abl to miss the fact that these could well be Communis aims. Yet they are in fact part of the avowed goals c the John Birch Society.

This is, of course, exactly the sort of silly gam the members of the John Birch Society play, and have no desire to imitate them. Even if in my judg ment achievement of the organization's goals woul materially assist the Communist cause, I don't reall think the John Birch Society is a Communist fron But at the same time I see no reason at all why anyon should take the group seriously as an anti-Communis effort.

In spite of all the nonsense that has been perpetrate in its name in recent years, anti-Communism is c should be a serious business. As far as I am concerne it is much too serious for Mr. Welch's dangerous kind c child's play.

JAMES O'GARA.

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A Woman's Place

The educated woman does not need special courses to prepare her for home-making or even bathing the baby

by DORIS GRUMBACH

IN THE YEAR just behind us there has been a spate of editorial discontent about, of all things, educated women. *Newsweek,* behind a garish cover featuring a montage of a young woman, Phi Beta Kappa key and giant diaper pin, devoted pages to the modern educated woman's dilemma. In the New York *Times Magazine* Marya Mannes analyzed the same trouble, calling her piece, "Female Intelligence: Who Wants it?" And more recently Marion K. Sanders wrote for *Harper's* a pointedly affirmative article called "A Proposition for Women."

Newsweek explored the trinity of blessings of the American mother in the upper-income brackets. The editors found her glowingly healthy ("freed from the tyranny of her body"), well-educated ("freed from the tyranny of ignorance"), well-to-do ("freed from the tyranny of poverty"). But even so thrice-blessed she finds herself troubled, disenchanted. *Newsweek* blames her over-educated expectations for her state: educated to a man's world, she is still denied entry into it because of her sex. Forced by her physiology, which education has not managed to affect (Freud pointed out that "anatomy is destiny"), to bear children and to raise them, she is bored, disillusioned about life and discontented with it. One university graduate is quoted as saying: "I'm tired of talking to people three feet high all day."

The *Newsweek* article ends on a number of optimistic notes. The modern, educated, healthy, well-to-do woman is to: 1) "avoid early marriages, finish college, spend two or three years in a career or in graduate work before the first baby," or 2) re-enroll in college, in order to free herself from "around-the-clock household duties," (thus "suburban business firms are eyeing the untapped matronly talent nearby"), and 3) keep in mind Dr. Margaret Mead's final gingerbread on the problem: "Remember, family life is not an end in itself. . . . Her (a woman's) goal should be development of herself as an individual, not because she is a wife and mother, but because she is a human being."

Marya Mannes in the *Times* is deeply concerned about the "terrible waste" of women of brains and talent who go to colleges in ever-increasing numbers, and come out only to be involved in "early and long domesticity." Her conclusions are more pessimistic than *Newsweek's:* no one wants her intelligence, neither prospective husbands who are repelled by it, nor society ("do we need more babies or do we need more doctors and scientists and thinkers and innovators?" she asks). She concludes that the only possible choice is for the serious intellectual woman or the female creative artist to lead a solitary, self-contained life, dedicated entirely to her art, accepting stoically the human cost of such an existence.

Mrs. Sanders' point, in *Harper's,* is apostolic. She traces three great needs in current American society for educated women: for nurses, for social workers, for teachers. Deploring the loss of these trained personnel to marriage and domesticity, Mrs. Sanders proposes the drafting and training of women between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six for a stipulated period. These women would serve "in the areas of critical need—chiefly our health, educational and social welfare services." In addition to the needed service thus rendered, Mrs. Sanders hopes many of the women will make a career in the field in which they have served their apprenticeship.

Mrs. Sanders' vision goes even further. Viewing the Israeli *kibbutzim* with favor, she feels that some such system might work well here to prevent entirely the return of the trained woman to home and drudgery. American children thus raised could not help but benefit ("spared many of the tensions of daily family life") from the absence of their mother who is then "freed from all domestic drudgery in order to pursue her pro-

Mrs. Grumbach is herself a teacher and a frequent contributor to various publications.

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fession during motherhood." In the future she envisions that "with her A.B. in hand, tomorrow's college graduate should be encouraged to enter a profession and to stick with it even if this involves postponing motherhood and eventually delegating some of its responsibilities."

I find myself, an educated, married, childed, working woman, feeling after all this worried consultation like a patient about whom the expert diagnosticians cannot agree, and in a state of nervous exasperation about the suggested cures. I admit freely the existence, among women I know, of the ailment. I don't like the suggested treatments, and yet the pain goes on hurting.

LOOK FIRST at *Newsweek*. The assumption in these pages is that the educated woman is miserable in her domestic captivity and, short of avoiding it entirely (as Dr. Mead seems to suggest we all do), the solution is to prepare early for escape, and then to do it as quickly as possible. Miss Mannes is blunter, but she sees no hope except the avoidance of all entangling alliances, especially the legal ones, which have a way of cluttering up the creative artist's life with those demanding impedimenta of life: a husband and children. Mrs. Sanders conceives of the role of modern woman as service to the community which she sees as a dual blessing—to her and to her beleaguered children.

The doctors all seem to underestimate the patient. A woman intellectual cannot be developed and sustained by removing her from the stresses and strains of her sexual inheritance. She cannot be preserved for the intellectually productive life by isolating her. Intellect in women (and I suspect in men too), is only a small part of the whole, and it needs the addition of physical and spiritual entities to become a whole thing. For the man or woman in religious life the whole becomes fixed when the spiritual half becomes welded to the physical, not when one is entirely subjugated to the other, and this is equally true of the educated woman in secular life.

Peace for any human being is a complex achievement, if indeed it can ever be achieved. In woman it is doubly so. If she has a good, trained mind she feels compelled to use it; she is, in addition, desirous of having children; she needs men. A friend writing recently of George Orwell said that he kept himself alive physically only because he was a writer, so complete was his devotion to his art, and this seems often to be true of men, especially highly creative men. I think it is far less true of women, for whom the involvement in the procreative process is deeper, longer and more intimate.

If this is true I wonder at Miss Mannes' solution to the "woman problem," and I doubt its efficacy. Escape from marriage and motherhood, or avoidance of it in the interest of a free, creative life usually seems to have truncated the woman in some way. The sense of loss or absence is not without its debilitating effects, and the creative or intellectual woman who seeks for wholeness or self-realization will not find it in isolation. There are of course exceptions to this observation, especially in the case of women of great spiritual powers, but since the worrisome articles deal with the general mass of educated women, I do too.

The illness of discontent strikes hardest, say the writers, once the woman has accepted her role as wife and mother. In the early days of child-rearing she may strain at the ties. The reason for this is not that she is over-educated, or too superior for her role, but because she is inadequately prepared for it. She has never been shown that, though she is out of the dog-eat-dog world of competitive business or education, more lives, minds and spirits are solely dependent on her now than would ever be true in the world at large.

For years a mother has the terrible responsibility of almost the entire education of each human being she bears. If what psychology tells us is so, this is a far more complicated and more demanding activity than editing a magazine, selling a dress, meeting a business executive, doing research for an advertising agency or even writing a book or painting a picture. If the educated woman saw her role clearly, if education courses and child-psychology courses and human relations courses, and even history and literature courses on the motives and minds behind human events, pointed out more clearly the pivotal importance of this early maternal instruction, her acceptance of the role would be easier. If it is status and recognition she is missing, where, she should be made to ask, in the realm of human endeavor can she be more assured of lasting status than in the expanding mind of a young child. Where can she be guaranteed recognition more surely than in his enlightened eyes?

THERE *is* no waste in the process of educating women, no loss. The woman who retires from the business or college world brings her training and her knowledge into a new sphere, applies her techniques for knowing or learning to know in an organized fashion to new skills. The honest woman, truly educated to her historical role, will not feel "too good" for it, but instead not good enough. She will need to read more widely and more acutely to understand her children and to help them, to bring sharpened powers of observation to bear upon the growth and development of young minds, to fill her free time (which grows with her children) more fruitfully and satisfyingly.

The burden of transmitting to the educated woman this realization of her role as wife and mother belongs to the college. I am convinced that woman's basic education should not differ from a man's. She needs to know as much science, as much mathematics, philoso-

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phy, classical languages, as much sociology, comparative literature and economics as her male friends in insurance companies, banks, executive suites and atomic energy laboratories. She does not need special home-making courses to prepare her for home-making, or even for bathing the baby and sewing his clothes. What she *does* require, and what few colleges make any effort to give her, is a clear understanding of the uses of her trained mind, and the importance of its application to other areas of endeavor.

Dr. Mildred McAfee Horton, former president of Wellesley and captain of the wartime Waves, has remarked that "Colleges failed to teach these women that . . . the family is entirely respectable as a sphere of activity." Dr. Mirra Komarovsky tells of a housework-defeated college graduate who said her college "made her feel 'too good for that sort of thing' ", and then she adds the horrifying observation: "Well, it is just possible that she *is* too good for it."

I would reply that college has not made her too good for that sort of thing; it has only mistakenly made her feel she is too good. She has failed to be made aware of the true nature of her job as a wife and mother of excellence. Her learning and training sit like a great cliff above the monotonous shore of her daily life, and she is torn by the chasm between them. Closing this gap meaningfully is the college's job. If it fails to make her aware of the ineffable value of a trained and well-stocked mind to the life she will lead, then it fails absolutely in its education of a woman.

It is not only for her husband and her children that she is educated; it is as much for herself. With learning and understanding the educated woman will be far less bored with family life than the uneducated woman. If her mind has been well furnished during her years of education with multitudinous outlets for aesthetic, and intellectual delight: music, art, literature, she will be grateful for this interior decoration during the long stretches of routine that might otherwise overcome her. She should know they are coming; she should, in college, provide against them with enough interior matter so that she will find enough within herself and in the constantly intriguing world around her to keep her from dismay.

If a woman has been given a clear understanding of her possible and vital influence in the ever-widening circles of baby, home, school, community and nation, she will not end her days in frustration and whimpering. The college must make her feel, not incapacitated by her education for a home life, but almost inadequate to it unless she brings to bear upon it all her training and information, unless she uses what she has learned, learns more continually and extends her education into the advanced degrees of family life.

TODAY AND TOMORROW

Men Out Of Work

by FRANCIS X. GANNON

LONG AFTER the present recession has "bottomed out," as the term is now being used, the troubling fact of hard-core unemployment will still remain with us. Pocket unemployment, not cured as of yet by any presently known remedies, has slipped steadily upwards over the past decade. We have grown accustomed to the buffetings of "cyclical," "structural," or "frictional" unemployment. But the contemporary form of hard-core "pocket" or "cluster" unemployment, which combines some of the worst features of these standard kinds of unemployment with newer conditions, has become a familiarity only in the past decade.

Statistics on unemployment issued with a seemingly impersonal regularity by the U. S. Labor Department tell us simply that the unemployment rate has gone up or down. These statistics, however, cannot indicate even to a minimal degree what contemporary unemployment implies. The Labor Department does attempt to circumvent the limitations of these figures by illustrating via its labor-surplus area estimates how unemployment affects certain areas and specific groups. Yet when these figures reach the attention of the public, by way of the communications media, they have assumed a matter-of-fact blandness which renders them practically meaningless.

Perhaps it is not the fault of the communications media, the unemployment statistics, or of the Labor Department itself, that the immediacy and severity of unemployment is not being brought home to the country at large. After all, five or six or even seven per cent unemployed does not seem to be a large figure. When

Mr. Gannon, a union research director, appears in The Commonweal for the first time.

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many middle-aged Americans think about unemployment, if they do so at all, the word symbolizes the mass unemployment of the 1930's. Unable to see breadlines on every corner, and overwhelmed by the car-in-every-room ads, the idea of prolonged unemployment frequently appears strange and even unusual to the general public.

We are all dimly aware that, unusual as it seems, severe prolonged unemployment does exist in the American economy. Indeed it is national in scope, and President Kennedy's Administration has done its best to focus attention on the full ramifications of joblessness. The factors of automation, changing defense requirements, and technological innovations have allied themselves with long-run sector conditions to make unemployment a critical and ever-expanding problem from one end of the United States to the other. It is a problem, it should be added, which experience has shown to be not curable by simple reliance on fiscal and monetary policies.

The most important feature about this unemployment picture is its "hard-core," protracted nature. Over the past decade about twenty major labor market areas and some fifty smaller areas in all parts of the United States have had high rates of unemployment. While most of the labor-surplus areas are found in the northeastern part of the country, at least one labor-surplus area has been spotted in twenty-two different states. Wyoming, Illinois, Indiana and Michigan are among the areas which have felt the sting of prolonged unemployment. Even prosperous Southern California with its "one-crop" defense economy grows uneasy every time the defense appropriations bills come up in Congress.

IN large measure, these centers of concentrated unemployment have sprung up as a result of changing patterns in the American economy. Automation has played an important role in these developments, as can be illustrated by the loss of 130,000 jobs in the automobile industry between 1948 and 1958. Current unemployment, however, is the result of more than automation. Technical innovations in such fields as plastics and electronics have been altering the patterns of the economy. Firms have moved out of high-wage, high-tax areas to take advantage of what most economists say are at best temporary low taxes and wages in other areas. Fewer workers are needed in manufacturing even though production is expanding. Consumer preferences for fuel requirements have undergone a transition. It is the combination of these developments which has been the prelude, if not the over-all cause, of the development of "hard-core" unemployment centers.

Several years ago most economists were in agreement that an unemployment rate of three per cent would not be overly exciting. On a national basis such optimism was and is probably true, and even with a nationwide five per cent unemployment estimate, which was the case during much of 1960, few would vehemently downgrade forecasts which predicted a continuing optimism for the economy. The wrangle over whether three per cent or five per cent is harmful nationally does not appear, however, to be the real question. The urgent need at present is not to analyze unemployment on a national scale, but regionally and locally. This has been the question most frequently by-passed when unemployment is discussed.

Everyone knows that national unemployment remained stable at approximately a five per cent level during 1960 and this year rose to six per cent plus. On the other hand, how many are aware of the effects of unemployment when its rate remains constant at ten or twelve per cent levels, as in many "hard-core" areas? And what about such areas as attested to by Congresswoman Elizabeth Kee in an appearance some time ago before the Senate Unemployment Committee? In Mingo County, West Virginia, according to Congresswoman Kee, the unemployment rate level throughout recent years had remained between forty and fifty per cent! More realistic, of course, are the thirteen and fifteen per cent rates which have existed for lengthy periods in various parts of Pennsylvania. However one approaches these figures for areas of protracted unemployment, they add up to a serious problem, and one not as yet adequately faced by the country as a whole.

Admittedly, some of the above percentage figures are themselves more striking than informative, but they are highly significant in view of the fact that today's unemployment exists in certain communities, racial groups and age brackets. For instance, the unemployment rate for single males has been more than three times greater than the rate for married men. While the rate for unskilled workers has at times averaged more than seven per cent, professional, technical and managerial help have had virtually no unemployment problems. In recent years the unemployment level for these employees has ranged from less than half of one per cent up to a trifle more than one and one-half per cent. Negro workers have had the hardest time of all in getting and keeping a job. For Negroes the unemployment rate has reached more than double the figure for whites.

The conclusion to be drawn from these figures is that, as the Senate studies insist, more attention should be paid to the structure of unemployment than to the level of unemployment. (This, of course, should not be a sign to forget over-all unemployment trends which historically have arisen cyclically in the American economy. In spite of all our built-in stabilizers, few economists are willing to say unreservedly we won't

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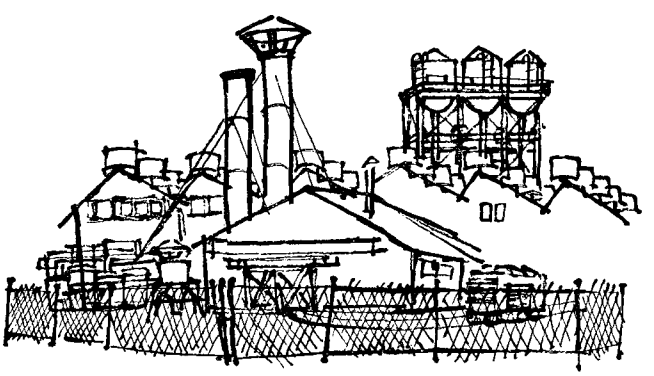
have a repeat of earlier depressions. Study should be directed here as well, since a nationwide recession can come at any time.)

Today, unemployment is chiefly a problem among particular groups and in specific areas. Its impact in these areas, however, is as severe today as widespread unemployment once was for the entire nation in earlier periods. In addition, current regional and group unemployment has taken on an aspect which is perhaps not new but which must be considered, namely, that long-term unemployment has become a notable factor. The unemployed remain unemployed for prolonged periods. In 1957, unemployment lasting fifteen weeks or longer averaged twenty per cent of the unemployment total. Even during 1958, this figure averaged thirty per cent of the unemployment total. In at least five months of the 1958 recession year, this long-term unemployed figure hit thirty-five per cent, and in February of this year it was twenty-eight and a half per cent. Even granting the effect of the expected business turn-up, what will this figure be for the rest of 1961? And if, as the demographers are predicting, the labor force is to rise by nearly fifty per cent in the next ten years, will prolonged unemployment inevitably continue at high levels in specific areas unless proper preventive action is taken?

MORE SERIOUS even than the figures indicate are the problems which stem from "hidden" unemployment. In economically depressed areas unemployment often becomes a major item, even though official figures do not take it into account. Hidden unemployment occurs chiefly through the premature withdrawal of the older worker from the labor force. If he can't find a new job, an older worker sometimes prematurely steps out of the labor force, and once the older employee loses a job, he has difficulty finding another. Statistics bring this out clearly. While as a group older persons are forced to look for work less frequently than younger workers, the older persons are looking for work for longer periods of time. For instance, in 1958, twenty-two per cent of the forty-five to sixty-four age group unemployed and almost thirty per cent of the sixty-five and over group were out of work for more than half the year. Compared with the figures for other age classes, these figures are quite high.



Because unemployment exists among certain groups and in certain areas it has not become a vital national concern. Being everyday pragmatists, most Americans appear to say if unemployment isn't felt personally, it doesn't exist. Certainly, if the articulate and public opinion-forming groups were being threatened with massive job losses, the entire country would soon be alerted to the danger of unemployment. But in the present situation of "limited" unemployment this will in all probability not occur. The temptation may be to be satisfied with stop-gap and platitude remedies, but we should realize that this is not enough.

Localized and protracted unemployment will haunt us for some time to come. Furthermore, each day more American firms transfer their production centers abroad, thereby creating localized job losses at home. Already, even unions which have had a tradition of anti-protectionism are calling for high tariffs to protect their members, and other economic and political repercussions will undoubtedly follow.

What then is to be done? The first thing is to center national attention on the real question which is that of group, area, or industry-wide unemployment. The second is to enact federal laws which will assist these groups and areas in resolving unemployment. Testimony by scores of witnesses before both the Senate and the House indicates why local areas are often powerless, despite heroic bootstrap attempts, to alleviate the seriousness of protracted unemployment.

Some of the problems faced by local areas arise because state unemployment compensation laws are completely inadequate and because state legislatures, often controlled by a die-hard coterie of standpatters, pretend that the unemployment situation does not exist. As a consequence, state unemployment laws are frequently unrealistic. Under the federal-state unemployment compensation program, federal regulations are minimum in nature, leaving a great deal of latitude to the states in the operation of the system. The result is that the state unemployment compensation laws contain major defects.

Even after the modifications made by many states in the past two years, for example, nearly three out of ten employees are not covered by the system. These are the employees of small firms, non-profit groups, state and local governments, and farm employees. In addition, the average weekly benefit amount as a proportion of average weekly wages for the nation as a whole is still very low. On a national average, it is estimated that the unemployment benefit covers only about twenty-five to thirty per cent of wages lost. Since it is the persons in low-wage groups who are hardest hit by unemployment, the unjust repercussions

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of inadequate unemployment benefits are apparent. As a step in the right direction, federal unemployment compensation standardization along the lines proposed in previous Congressional sessions should become law. The benefits should be increased to at least fifty per cent of a person's wage, and this uniform compensation should also be extended to the seven out of ten employees not yet covered by law.

ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT Eisenhower vetoed several depressed area bills during his term of office, on the part of the communities affected there is no doubt that a major remedy for the existing kinds of unemployment is precisely the legislation vetoed. Time and time again the local communities subject to protracted unemployment have insisted before Congress on the need for federal action. Even local Chambers of Commerce, probably to the dismay of their parent headquarters, continually point to the soundness of the depressed areas legislation which Congress has several times passed. Anyone paying a visit to Capitol Hill during Congressional sessions could see a parade of local businessmen and local Chamber officials requesting action, not on the legislation which the Republican Administration had proposed but on that which Congress passed.

The aim of such legislation passed by Congress has been, in our Lockean fashion, to have local areas assist themselves as much as possible. The bills provided for financial and technical aid for the affected areas so that those involved could study their economic resources and make future plans. All segments of the community, business, labor and local government, could participate actively in creating a grass roots program. Low-interest federal redevelopment loans in the neighborhood of $200-$250 million would provide aid in the construction of modern plants. An equivalent amount of money would construct public facilities needed to attract and to hold industry.

While unemployment compensation uniformity and depressed area legislation are two vital matters facing the nation and the Congress, there is perhaps one long-term remedy to which insufficient attention has been given. This is the question of moving workers from one area to another when management moves its operations. Depressed areas legislation has contained some provisions for relocating or retraining jobless employees, but inadequate attention has been paid to the over-all complexities of this problem.

When a plant moves to another area, many workers do not want to move. Their families and friends and the familiarity of their surroundings exert pressure upon these employees to remain where they are even though they are jobless. As labor mobility studies have shown, the unknown and the uncertain play a large role in keeping displaced workers where they are. Most of the companies which transfer operations are not equipped to assist these employees in relocating, and many firms which move to low-wage, low-tax areas insist on training new employees. In this way, as is obvious, some firms often seek to circumvent unionization. The out-of-work employees unable to find a job soon become demoralized and accept whatever comes along.

From an economic point of view, it seems that in the long run the economic system of the country may benefit more from joint federal-state action in this area than in any other. The remedies previously mentioned are vital legislative necessities, as are several others which could be discussed, but for the economic health of the country, it is essential that a federal-state agency be established which would assist dislocated workers in selling their homes, in shipping their goods, and in buying homes in the new plant areas. At the present time, some governmental agencies do exist to assist dislocated employees in finding new jobs, but the assistance is inadequate and frequently misdirected, and usually this assistance provides job advice and retraining but includes only minimal relocation help.

It is true that when skilled employees leave an area, the area suffers as a result of the loss of technical skills. But it must be realized that while some regions can be aided tremendously by distressed area aid, other areas may never be fully helped by such assistance. New industries, for economic reasons, will not go into some areas. Costs may be too high or local Chambers of Commerce officials may be satisfied with the status quo, preferring a small town atmosphere to an expanding area economy. For these and for many other reasons, an effective federal-state agency should be established or a presently existing agency should be given proper authority to assist in relocating employees. In this way the economy will not lose the skills and potentials of highly trained and adaptable employees. Certainly, the new areas which receive these employees and the depressed areas which lost their skills will both benefit in the long-run. By passing this kind of legislation Congress can move far towards ensuring that the economy will continue to get full benefits whenever plant dislocations take place.

We are now entering upon a phase in our economic history when competition in international markets may force additional dislocation in American industry. If Congress is to ensure the economic viability of the nation in efforts to cope with these dislocations it will have to take a long-range view in relieving the plight of those suffering from hard-core, protracted unemployment. This cannot be done without standardizing and increasing unemployment compensation, passing adequate distressed area legislation, and setting up or transferring authority to an agency empowered to assist workers able and willing to relocate.

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The Press and the People

by MICHAEL DERRICK

NO OTHER NATION in the world reads so many newspapers as we do in Britain, and none pays so little attention to what they say. The first proposition is demonstrable statistically, the second by observation.

For every one thousand of our population we print 573 copies of our newspapers, where you in the United States print only 350. More than thirty million newspapers are printed in this country every day, to say nothing of all the vast outpouring of magazines and other periodicals. But only a very small proportion of these are read for the information that they provide, and still fewer for the views that they advance.

It would be a bold man who would claim that either news or views are sought after by the average reader of any other newspaper than the *Times* and the *Guardian,* which sell about one million copies a day between them—the *Times* just over half a million and the *Guardian,* fast catching up, just under half a million. Both cost more than the other dailies, and so can afford to live on such relatively modest sales.

The *Guardian,* which has just announced that in the autumn it will start to print in London as well as Manchester, owes its rapid development since the war to the absence of competition from any other daily less pompous than the *Times* which really bothers to think about what's going on. The *Daily Telegraph* makes little pretense at thinking; it serves up plenty of serious information (together with crime reporting of unrivalled detail), but its editorials command little or no attention; it is Conservative in a somewhat complacent way, the bourgeois paper *par excellence*. But the papers with the really big circulations—the *Daily Mirror* and the *Daily Express,* breathless to know which will top the five million mark first—are overwhelmingly bought for the entertainment they provide.

True, Lord Beaverbrook has strong views which everybody knows and which his newspapers dutifully plug—his old-fashioned ideas about the Empire and his preference for that term rather than the new-fangled word "Commonwealth"; his hostility to the European movement; his dislike of the Germans and of the German connections of the royal family; his scorn for the retiring Archbishop of Canterbury, and so on. But these are not views which make any particular impression on anybody, except perhaps the Germans in Germany who are constantly quoting the *Daily Express* to show how tetchy the British are. To English readers they are just a source of innocent fun.

THE LACK of influence in the press is shown most at election time: Winston Churchill's government was thrown out at the end of the war despite the overwhelming weight of the press cheering it along. The British have a healthy tradition of making up their own minds about politics, and what political influence is exerted upon them comes more and more through the medium of radio and television, upon which they likewise depend more and more for their information about the world's affairs.

Apart from the Communists with their negligible *Daily Worker,* no political party in this country controls a newspaper of any kind, a fact which constantly amazes people on the continent of Europe. It is true that the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Daily Mail* back the Conservatives, but they are not party papers; they are too eager for all the readers they can get to risk being thought of too narrowly in that way. It is true also that the smallest of the Sunday papers, and one which will be lucky to survive many more years, *Reynolds' News,* is run by the Co-operative Movement in the interests of the Labor Party. But the history of the *Daily Herald* is the classic example to show that a daily newspaper cannot survive if it is tied to a political party. More than twelve million people voted Labor in the last General Election, in 1959, but fewer than a million and a half buy the *Daily Herald,* and that, these days, is not enough to avoid financial loss.

In its heroic days, from 1912 to 1930, the *Daily Herald* was a party paper; once, in the early 1920's, it grandly declined a take-over bid from the Comintern. But it was always fighting a losing battle, even in those easier days, and in 1930 it had to call in capitalist support, in the shape of Odham's Press. The Trade Unions Congress retained political control, and forty-nine per cent of the financial interest; Odham's had the other fifty-one per cent. So it has been divided ever since, with more and more relaxation of the political control to meet the constant warning that it must attract readers who are not Socialists if it is to survive,

Mr. Derrick is a member of the editorial staff of the London *Tablet*. This is his first appearance in The Commonweal.

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and must persuade its advertisers that its readers are people with money to spend and not merely shirt-sleeved proletarians. It was a moment of decision when the Waggs family whose adventures appear in its comic strip were required to suffer the loss of their old plebeian tenement dwelling in a fire so as to be able to move into a suburban villa with a telephone on the hall table.

Similarly, the *Daily Mirror,* which used to support the Labor Party, although in a more detached way, with its slogan "Forward with the People," dropped that slogan like a red-hot brick at the time of the last General Election, and got rid of its brilliant Socialist columnist, Mr. R. H. S. Crossman, now the Labor Party's chairman (and the scourge of Mr. Gaitskell). That was a condition of its continued success; today the *Daily Mirror* has its regular City Page strip cartoon for small investors.

NOW THE *Daily Mirror* has beaten the Canadian tycoon Roy Thompson for control of Odham's Press, and with it of the *Daily Herald.* Let it be noted that this is not primarily the take-over of one newspaper by another. It is the victory of the *Daily Mirror's* highly lucrative series of illustrated women's weekly magazines over the rival series of barely distinguishable weeklies owned by the Odham's group. The take-over of the *Daily Herald* is a purely incidental liability.

The long-drawn-out battle between Mr. Cecil King of the *Daily Mirror* and Mr. Roy Thompson, over the recumbent but actively kicking body of Odham's Press, was the proximate cause (as the theologians say) of the Labor Party pressure on the Prime Minister to set up a new Royal Commission to enquire into the whose structure of the press; as he has now done, choosing Lord (formerly Sir Hartley) Shawcross to preside over it. The remoter cause was the over-night murder, last October, of the daily *News Chronicle,* with its associated London evening paper, *The Star.* That was something which really shocked the nation, partly because a large number of journalists were thrown suddenly out of work and partly because of the cynical fashion in which the proprietors of that sturdy old Radical newspaper tried to hand over its circulation, served up on a plate, so to speak, to the Tory *Daily Mail,* the purchasers.

The last issue of the *News Chronicle* contained not a word to suggest that it might be the last; next morning all its subscribers received the *Daily Mail* unsolicited through their letter-boxes. The *News Chronicle* had come out on top of comparable struggles in the past; as the *Daily News,* proud of having had Charles Dickens as its first Editor, it swallowed the old *Westminster Gazette* like a boa constrictor in 1928, and itself "murdered" the *Daily Chronicle* two years afterwards in much the same fashion as it in turn was murdered last October. But at least its own victims belonged to the same political tradition.

THE TWO LESSONS that Fleet Street sharply learned last October were, first, that nobody bothers very much now about the political traditions, and, secondly, that a circulation of a million and a quarter is not enough to keep a daily newspaper solvent in this country. Two other newspapers with national circulations died suddenly soon after the *News Chronicle* had done so, but these were both low-grade Sunday sheets for which few tears were shed: the *Empire News* and the *Sunday Graphic.* On the other hand, a new Sunday newspaper has just come into existence—the *Sunday Telegraph,* a Sunday presentation of its daily namesake. The casualties helped, however, to build up the pressure for a Royal Commission.

Was control of the press falling into too few hands? Four out of five of the readers of popular newspapers in this nation of insatiable newspaper readers, said Mr. Gaitskell in the House of Commons, are reading newspapers controlled by one or another of three men: he was referring to Lord Beaverbrook, Mr. Cecil King, and Lord Rothermere, who has the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Sketch.* But it cannot be seriously claimed that any of these mass-circulation dailies are really molding the minds of men; like the Sunday papers with even larger circulations (the *News of the World,* mainly interested in sex crimes, sells nearly seven million copies every Sunday), the mass-circulation dailies are produced and sold as entertainment.

It is still less than twelve years since the last Royal Commission on the press, set up by the post-war Labor Government which did not like to think that all the press was ranged against it, concluded that the concentration of newspaper ownership was "not so great as to prejudice the free expression of opinion or the accurate presentation of news, or to be contrary to the best interests of the public." And the position has not substantially changed since then. The number of "chains" remains the same; the only difference is that some of the chains have changed hands.

Tycoon Roy Thompson, who arrived in this country from Canada in 1953 and bought *The Scotsman* in the following year, now controls no fewer than eighty-eight newspapers, but only because, just over a year ago, he bought out Lord Kemsley. And Tycoon Thompson, in reply to the charge that he is a menace to the freedom of opinion, says very frankly that he doesn't care what views his eighty-eight editors express so long as they make money. There still remain in this country something like a hundred and fifty daily and Sunday newspapers, national and regional, with considerable diversity of ownership. And more and more they don't care what they say so long as they avoid losing money. That is the real tragedy.

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An Exchange of Views

"Scandal of New Orleans"

New Orleans, La.

TO THE EDITORS: In The Commonweal for February 3, Mr. James Lawrence wrote a blistering denunciation of "the undercurrent of racial hatred" and the "savagery of street mobs" in New Orleans, with particular criticism as follows: "Federal Judge Skelly Wright's order to the School Board to start integrating the first grade was a mistake. His postponement of the deadline from September to November was a further blunder. The way in which Superintendent Redmond used the seventeen-point 'pupil-placement plan' was both *a moral and a strategic error.*" (The italics are mine.)

Mr. Lawrence tempered his severe criticism of the Catholic Church by granting that "the religious leaders of all faiths in New Orleans cannot be charged with the ill-will and insincerity that characterize the public officials of the City and State." He also said that "every decent citizen has been besmirched by it (the racial hatred), especially the handful of progressive, courageous citizens of both races who have made attempts to alleviate the problem."

Of necessity, the most carefully selected handful of courageous citizens in New Orleans would have to include Dr. James F. Redmond, Superintendent of Public Schools, who, with four members of his school board, accepted instructions from the Federal Courts and brought desegregation to at least one New Orleans school, which has not been accomplished to date in any other primary school under any other leaders, religious or otherwise, in New Orleans.

The Federal Judge gave the integration order; the Louisiana Legislature passed the pupil placement law; the Federal Courts approved. Dr. Redmond then began his historic battle (over three months ago) with the legislators who tried to fire him for implementing the law they had passed and who spent "an estimated $700,000 to adopt measures (for segregation) that have been thrown out steadily by Federal Judges." (Harnett Kane, N.Y. *Times,* Jan. 29.)

It is generally known by now that a confidential letter was sent to all pastors in the Catholic Archdiocese, setting a tentative integration date of Nov. 21 —one week after the beginning of public school integration—and outlining a progressive procedure of integration, starting with the first grade, and that copies of this letter found their way into the hands of White Citizens Council leaders and were publicized. As of the date of this writing (almost three months later and two years after the Archbishop declared segregation immoral) no date has been given for the integration of Catholic schools.

Dr. Redmond, in the face of personal threats and harassment, refused to be intimidated. The Catholic Church deemed it wiser to wait.

I am not taking issue here with the Church, but with Mr. Lawrence's ill-advised attack on Dr. Redmond. My contention is that Dr. Redmond does not share the poor light in which Mr. Lawrence himself presented the Catholic Church.

Mr. Lawrence criticizes Dr. Redmond, along with the religious leaders, for not availing themselves of the "accumulated wisdom of professionals" which could have helped the authorities "avoid all these blunders." Whether or not the Catholic authorities passed up expert guidance in this connection, the real blunder seems to have come from the pastor who (inadvertently?) let that confidential letter get into the hands of the White Citizens Council. In any event, that did it! Catholic school integration was held up, while Dr. Redmond proceeded in the face of a great deal worse than the publicizing of an integration date. He was persecuted, fired by the State Legislature (rescued by the Federal Courts), denied his salary, and denied funds with which to operate the schools. If the Catholic Church had taken even a token integration step, however blundering, it would have released a substantial amount of additional support for Dr. Redmond who, by the way, is a Catholic.

Mr. Lawrence states that the pupil-placement plan was a strategic error. The pupil-placement law was passed by the State Legislature; approved by the Federal Courts. Dr. Redmond had no choice. The point is that he did *act.*

The pupil-placement plan is, roughly, as follows: The principal consideration in requests for transfer from one school to another is the potential of the pupil in relation to the mediant of the class to which he has requested transfer. The pupil must be able to keep up with the class; a class mediant cannot be lowered or jeopardized to accommodate transfer of a pupil. Other factors, such as crowded classrooms, dividing children in a given family, etc., are also considered. If pupils requesting transfer from School A. to School B. do not meet the requirements, they are denied transfer; if the requests for transfer from School H. to School

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K. do meet the requirements, the transfers are effected. And that is how the schools were chosen. (Isn't there a similar plan in universities?)

Does Mr. Lawrence really think that his plan, however more scientifically correct, would have worked more effectively on *November 14* against prevalent prejudice, the violent opposition of the State Legislature and the threats of schism by Catholics who opposed the Archbishop?

No amount of accumulated wisdom is as effective as example. The State Legislature had the example of Little Rock (eventual integration) and the Catholic Church had the example of the Archdiocese of St. Louis (among others) which integrated long before the Supreme Court decision seven years ago.

I am, like Mr. Lawrence, using a pseudonym.

NICHOLAS GORMAN.

REPLY

New Orleans, La.

TO THE EDITORS: Dr. Redmond was caught in a situation which was not to his taste. The four "good" members of the school board, even they, are avowed supporters of segregation. The *immorality* of the pupil-placement-plan, which in this instance Dr. Redmond supervised, lies in this: (a) it is not applied equally for children of both races; (b) it was applied with extraordinary rigor for the Negro children; (c) it is admittedly a Southern device to nullify effective desegregation. Its use in New Orleans was a *strategic* error because (a) the attempt was made to start desegregation with too few Negro children; (b) these colored pupils were placed in two schools in a run-down area of the city.

If the Catholic school system of New Orleans had imitated this illogical and impractical approach on Monday, November 21, it would have been making the same moral and strategic error.

JAMES LAWRENCE.

THE SCREEN

CRY, 'HAVOC!'

IT IS INTERESTING that two of the most powerful anti-war movies to appear on our screens in a long time are from abroad and from countries that were formerly our enemies. From Germany has come "The Bridge," a film that is doubly effective not only because it says war is hell but also because it shows in vivid cinematic terms the poignant story of a group of boys who are needlessly slaughtered in defending a worthless bridge. The realistic combat scenes in the last part of the film put over its message, but what gives "The Bridge" real meaning is its first half that establishes these young fellows and wins us to them and then involves every man in the sudden and senseless finale of their promising future.

The thing to remember as you watch "The Bridge," set in a small German village, is that this is in April of 1945, when the High Command must have already realized all was lost, that the Allies were sweeping through Germany, and the battle shown at the picture's end takes place a few days before the death of Mussolini and Hitler and less than two weeks before the unconditional surrender. Director Bernhard Wicki's greatest achievement in the film is not in the shockingly realistic scenes depicting the horrors of war (everyone knows that war is horrible, and the next war won't be like this anyway) but in portraying the seven boys so well that their dreams of glory and disillusionment become more real than the physical experience.

The German kids, enthusiastically played by sixteen-year-olders who could very well be the groping adolescents they characterize so effectively, are like teenagers everywhere. A few are mother-smothered, a few idolize their fathers, a few have just discovered that father is not the idol they thought, one fancies himself in love with the only girl in their class at high school, and only two of the seven view their draft call and the quick military training that follows with cynicism and cold disdain—one because he is a refugee from Berlin who survived the bombings there and the other because he is aware of the kind of cheat his Nazi father is. Neither of these two has any illusions about the glory of war, but the others are impelled by ideals of heroism and hardly notice the ill-fitting uniforms, the rebellious soldiers around them or the atmosphere of gloom that has already descended on Germany.

To save these raw recruits from certain death from the advancing Americans, their captain assigns them under a corporal to patrol a bridge in their own village. Ironically, after the kindly corporal is shot by the Germans as a deserter, the boys don't know the bridge is worthless and they defend it to the death—in a series of violent episodes that throw the viewer for a loop as he hopes against hope for the safety of these likable young fellows.

Greatly assisting director Wicki in this thoughtful and disturbing movie are his good cast and the well-written script which stems from Manfred Gregor's novel. "The Bridge," concentrating as it does on young people, is in the tradition of "All Quiet on the Western Front" and other famous anti-war films; like the best in the genre, it does more than preach: it tells a fascinating story.

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THE OTHER war-time film is from Italy. If it is even more bitter than "The Bridge," this is due to its emphasis not on combatants but on civilians and what war does to them.

"Two Women," with its excellent script by Cesare Zavattini based on the novel by Alberto Moravia, has been brilliantly directed by Vittorio De Sica in the neo-realist style of Rossellini's "Open City" and "Paisan." Telling the episode story of a mother and daughter who flee from Rome in 1943 hoping to escape the heavy bombing in a southern village, "Two Women" builds up in scene after scene to a shattering climax and a finale that leaves its audience limp.

Never before has Sophia Loren given such a stirring performance, playing the mother who is not as good or as bright as she should be, but who is unswerving in her devotion to her teenage daughter. Miss Loren still has her hip-swinging saucy manner, but she also displays a new tenderness, selfless concern and determined fight in caring for the girl whom she overprotects. Eleanora Brown is lovely as this semi-invalid, and she is especially attractive when she begins to fall in love with an idealistic young man (exceedingly well played by Jean Paul Belmondo) who in turn is attracted to the mother.

As in his "Shoeshine" and "Bicycle Thief," director De Sica is interested in "Two Women" in showing how dire circumstances bring out the best and worst in man. Unfortunately the privations of war seem to bring out the worst; and neither the efforts at neighborliness nor the stern lectures of idealist Belmondo can soften the self-centered people with whom the mother and daughter take refuge in the mountains —people obsessed by thoughts of food and posessions. But after leaving them, Sophia and the girl are swept into greater tragedy—in one of the cruellest scenes ever shown in a war film—involving rape by Moroccan soldiers, with an aftermath that is heart-breaking. One realizes that even if there hadn't been a war, the mother and daughter were in for trouble and sorrow; but in "Two Women" the war is the agent. Carlo Ponti's first-rate production of this film, with its stunning black-and-white photography and De Sica's direction of this good cast, is another outstanding contribution to cinema's worthy war on war.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

BELLS OF LOMBARDY

Agèd soul, I sometimes say
to my mother in Milan, if I hear her
in another room, while she complains

praying, complains with the weak
and sharp sighs of souls in pain,
that sting the overlet of her many years.

Agèd soul, I say, and I am disconcerted,
meditating with her. . . . — Sometimes,
—she murmurs—I lack faith. . . . In the silence

of the fog of winter, here in Milan,
while I stoop in hurt, the dawn barely
up on its ear, I too feel this existence,

outside, objective, treacherous, profound,
of quite difficult truth, which claims life
for itself alone. Saint Ambrose

was a holy hieratic, adversary
of petty disputes, censor of the power
of real things, imponderables,

too much for souls to decipher. . . . Splendid
his priestly garb. . . . But we Tuscans,
I say to mama, do you remember the eye
of Saint Antonine that like a swallow's
seems to pierce the dark for her sweet fledglings?
That pointed face without any forgetfulness,

with something wintry in its delicate lips
which warms a holiest irony for us
who suffer here, not knowing

or knowing of life becoming something
that, if it is well, is hardly our art
of living, of which we make another art. . . .

It is difficult to answer a saint
who asks of us: Have you done that which
you should have done? And he points his tapered
nose,

points, smelling out errors for eternity.
The bells of Lombardy heard far-off
mingle with my mother's breath.

Surely we are here in order to die;
but it is for us to live as one must die
on the cross, with this God whose presence at times

is lost upon us, yet whom we believe in;
it is for Christians, yes, returning to life.
From every truth hope is born.

[*From* Tetti Toscani *(1948-54) by Carlo Betocchi*]

Translated by I. L. SALOMON.

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The Immediate Misfortunes of Widespread Literacy

TALES FROM A TROUBLED LAND. By Alan Paton. Scribner's. $3.50.
EIGHT MEN. By Richard Wright. World. $3.95.
SATURDAY LUNCH WITH THE BROWNINGS. By Penelope Mortimer. McGraw-Hill. $3.95.
WINTER'S TALES 6. Edited by A. D. MacLean. St. Martin's. $4.75.

By RICHARD GILMAN

ONE OF the misfortunes of an age of widespread literacy is that it inflicts upon us a great deal of literature that in less democratically educated times would not have seen the light of day. Probably the amount of good writing is fairly constant in every epoch, but the percentage is certainly way down. Of the four volumes of short fiction I have just worked my way through, only one seemed to me worth all the trouble it takes (writer, publisher, editor, printer, designer, messenger boy, account executive, bookseller—all those hands in on it, all those skills functioning in air). Another had intermittent virtues, while the third was at best merely unobjectionable and the fourth was embarrassing.

I shall start from the bottom and work up. Richard Wright is dead now and I have no intention of belaboring his memory; but he was simply not a good writer, not even a competent one, and it might be useful to make a notation upon what the sources of his reputation were. I think it clear that he was one of those authors about whom circumstances gather to distill extra-literary excitement and interest, in his case of course the circumstance being the fact that he was Negro and the first of his race to write about what that meant, in full acceptance of its terrors, frustrations and imposed shame.

I haven't read *Native Son* in many years. But if I say that I remember fairly vividly how it jolted me, as it did so many others, it is also true that the jolt was of the sociological order, not the esthetic, impelling me into recognitions that were certainly important, perhaps more important than literary ones, but nevertheless entering a different order of experience and therefore subject to another kind of judgment.

Eight Men has not even the advantage that *Native Son* had. We are long past the stage of shock and recognition; what we need now, if we can ever be said to *need* anything from Negro writers that places them under obligations and pressures different from those of any author, is something in the nature of a merging of images that possess a common base: our reality and their reality, half-identical and half-clashing, seen from their point of view, or point of imagination, and complementing our own, our brother's story, so to speak, told with that kind of fearful intimacy that makes a mockery of our artificial distances.

But *Eight Men,* stories that have been brought together from various periods of Wright's career (a few have not previously been published) is a dismayingly stale and dated book. Its tales of Negroes struggling to survive in a white world or being defeated by it creak with mechanical ineptitude; its attempts at humor, at tragedy, at pathos all fail; its two experiments—stories written entirely in dialogue—are painful to read; and the sensibility at work in it is so self-conscious, so liable to lapses of taste, so unsubtly enamored of literary effects, that all the pain and the earnestness, all the angels that hover over the "right side" cannot rescue it.

Alan Paton does not need to be rescued; he is not that badly off. But I cannot generate more than the thinnest interest in his work, and that interest has mostly political or humanitarian sources. Paton resembles Wright in that he is also the impassioned defender of a side, although as a white man in South Africa he doesn't of course presume to be the Negroes' spokesman. He is actually a much more polished writer than Wright, but he too suffers from the nature of his literary impulse, which is predominantly social, expiatory and full of narrow urgencies. His quasi-biblical style, so marked in *Cry, the Beloved Country,* is not so much in evidence here, and he has moved to a new sophistication of theme, that of the ambivalent moral aspects of the Negro-White relationship. But it is all still too contingent, too strongly hinting that if this situation passes, this dilemma is solved, then this particular voice will have nothing more to say.

Moving up the ladder there is *Winter's Tales,* the sixth in a series of collections of longer stories by English and Irish writers. There is nothing incompetent about most of them (although Liam O'Flaherty, the biggest name in the book, is represented by its worst story, a professionally Irish piece of staggering folksiness) but neither is there anything very wonderful. With one exception the ten stories are involved in one or the other of the two dominant moods of short fiction today: ruefulness or pared-down loyalty—the discovery of something minor worth holding onto.

The exception is a story called *Outside the Machine,* by Jean Rhys, a fierce uncompromising work, full of brass tacks, knots and things hard to swallow, energetic and ungenteel, yet perfectly shaped to its anger and extreme despair. It concerns a woman's finding the truth about how difficult it is to live, and it will not leave you unshaken.

Finally, there is Penelope Mortimer's *Saturday Lunch at the Brownings.* Miss Mortimer, an Englishwoman, is a good solid craftsman whose virtues the *New Yorker* has frequently brought to our attention. She is a poet of our small boredoms and unhappinesses, chiefly domestic, and if she doesn't have much range she does have bite and precision. I don't really know what distinguishes her from her fellow-practitioners of the *No Exit* story set in the library or nursery or patio or maid's quarters, unless it is her somewhat richer

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sense of betrayal. There *should* be a door, she suggests strongly, without ever trying to soften the ache that comes from knowing that at the moment it simply isn't there.

A Camera's Eye

THE REAL SILVESTRI. By Mario Soldati. Knopf. $2.95.

By ALICE ELLEN MAYHEW

MARIO Soldati is a skilled movie director in Italy, as well as author of note, and everything about his work suggests the trained, methodical, quick-clever eye of the cinema artist. He sights the color, the shape, and the visual mood of the scenes in which he is going to set his players playing. Then he moves his cast in, one by one, so that we can observe them very precisely through the eyes of the narrator (camera) in a variety of poses. His style is naturalistic: the camera-narrator moves listlessly about among the characters. He has a point of view, naturally, but so does the lens. And like the latter, though he can focus true, he can only pick up the surface effects. He depends, as does the cameraman, on catching his subjects at on and off moments, exposed under a bright glare that makes deception difficult, involved in small thoughtless actions. After a while as happens when the author or the director is a good enough craftsman—one intuitively distinguishes the real from the unreal.

While the camera ranges over a variety of scenes (which Soldati paints very vividly and fills with believable yet bizarre extras), he introduces the argument-melodrama. Through a series of artful subterfuges, the narrator passively submits to the points of view of the participants who must be in conflict. Now we have the metaphysical-melodramatic suspense. Where does the truth lie? What, and who is real? Or when are they being their real selves? When are they speaking the truth?

Like all storytellers of innate common sense, Soldati does not inhibit or dissipate his drama by pausing to ask if truth exists, for there could be no drama if it did not. He understands this, even though he takes a cautious position on men's ability to recognize the truth in themselves, and in each other.

It is the problem, as well as the method, of *The Real Silvestri,* to discover the real motives of the characters, particularly those of Silvestri, the center of the comedy and the dullest of all. It is here that novelist Soldati's method breaks down in posturing and mannerism. One becomes terribly conscious of the machinery just as one feels the lack of the pure novelist's incisive digging in and behind the surface realities. The voices drone, the camera wanders, becomes silly and vague, the pictures blur off into a placid idiocy.

What was supposed to have been sharp, modern and lean soddens down; in the end, it is not so much *nouvelle vague* as it is *fin de siècle.*

Behind all this technique, Soldati is retelling one of the oldest stories in the world, using one of the oldest devices. Silvestri, a uniquely ugly, but literary and romantic man, is always falling hopelessly in love. The last time, it is with the wife of a friend. This beautiful Frenchwoman with a slightly tawdry past, regards him at first as an oddity, then as a bore, then discovers he is a degenerate and sadistic monster. His oldest and best friend knows this to be a mistake. He sees his friend as a kind of Don Quixote, a saint in search of the truth, an artist in search of eternal beauty and fulfillment. The woman and the friend (narrator) meet five years after his death. She tells how Silvestri tortured her, blackmailed her, and caused her to lose her rich lover, though all the while pretending to know nothing of what he was doing. The friend defends Silvestri and explains that all was coincidence, that his friend's love was pure, and that she was too gross to understand it.

Then, the friend doubts his friend and, by implication, himself. He sees that he has ascribed to the woman a sense of guilt (his own) which is out of character with her in order to convince himself that her ideas of Silvestri were a fantasy; and that he had ascribed to Silvestri a nostalgia that was his own, a mode of being that he had himself renounced. Silvestri had been, after all, a man.

It was what the camera, in focus, should have told us all along, and it should have been only the start of the novelist's probing of the undertruths of the mystery of people and life.

There Were Giants...

THE FIFTY YEAR DECLINE AND FALL OF HOLLYWOOD. By Ezra Goodman. Simon & Schuster. $5.95.

By WILFRID SHEED

LIKE ex-generals and other highly regimented types, ex-*Time* writers are apt to run wild when given their freedom. Mr. Goodman has not only worked for *Time,* but for Warner Brothers' publicity department so his book is a wild one indeed. In a wordy attempt to lay bare everthing that is wrong with Hollywood, he has in effect ripped up the rugs and piled up the furniture, to the point where a kind of hysterical relief sets in. Whatever he may have done for Hollywood, he has done Mr. Goodman a world of good.

His method is on the whole brassy, vulgar, knowing, entertaining and superficial—enough like Hollywood itself to clang with authenticity. He has no time for Eastern eggheads who rail at Hollywood for the more obvious reasons (they ever meet a payroll? is the tone of it); in fact there are moments when he seems so enmeshed in the toils of love-hate that he wants the criticism of Hollywood all to himself.

What he has to say about the films themselves can be summed up in a few sentences. The phrase "silents are golden" crops up at least four times. Any director who uses words in his pictures is off to

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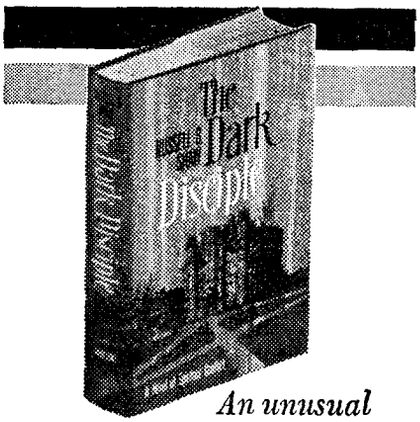

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a bad start with Mr. Goodman—a conventional egghead point of view, incidentally, which has come in for a good deal of serious challenge recently. Laid down as dogma, however, it enables the author to dismiss every contemporary director with superb disdain. Billy Wilder uses too much dialogue; George Stevens is too talky; and so on. Readers who enjoy seeing famous names demolished may not realize how little has actually been said about them. Goodman's only other criterion seems to be whether the camera gets moved around enough.

Once these reasonable but somewhat trite critical canons have been established, he can get on with his real business, which is gossip. At this he is unexcelled: and perhaps after all it is the best way of dealing with Hollywood. At first one is disconcerted by his style of lumping in criticism and anecdote as if they were interchangeable. Even his very vindictive sketch of Stanley Kramer, which is esthetically monstrous, may have a kind of Hollywood validity to it. Kramer is a bad director, Goodman appears to suggest, because of certain tortuous business-dealings — nonsense, of course, but business-dealings *do* have a relevance to film-making. Perhaps Goodman's value is precisely in showing the difficulty of finding firm critical ground.

Even for judging gossip as such Mr. Goodman relates a good many of the colony's more fatuous glamor-activities, but it is hard to tell whether he is for them or against them. Certainly things were just as silly in the old days, over which he rhapsodizes; perhaps his criticism is that they are no longer silly enough. Mack Sennett is quoted to the effect that Hollywood was more fun in the old days, partly because "we were younger." Maybe that's it. Everybody was smaller and younger.

Where Mr. Goodman is at his sharpest and least ambiguous is in his chapter on the Hollywood press —an institution so suffocatingly artificial that no half-way honest self-appraisal has apparently ever come out of it before. If the author is right, and he sounds right, this is a blood-curdling example of a corrupt press. And the corruption comes mainly from within, the cost of bribing a Hollywood reporter being no more than few free-lunches and a trumped-up handout.

As a hatchet-job, *The Fifty Year Decline and Fall of Hollywood* is on the messy side. It never comes close to the jugular, unless it be in the passage where we learn that producers now edit films instead of directors (this is somewhat equivalent to sponsor interference in television). Otherwise, it just hacks away, and leaves Hollywood at last to bleed to death. To the reader over twelve, who has presumably lost touch with Hollywood sometime ago, this may still be of more than antiquarian interest. The air of spooky unreality that can settle over a company-town may carry a wider moral. And beyond that, Mr. Goodman has written a very amusing and satisfyingly vengeful book.

Best and Worst

RAPE OF HONOR. By Willi Heinrich. Dial Press. $4.95.

By BRUCE A. COOK

THERE IS a temptation to see more in the work of Willi Heinrich than is really there. At its best—as in the novel *Crack of Doom*—it is hard and relentlessly honest, characterized by a blunt tone that is utterly new to German writing. At its worst it is inflated by lengthy sexual fantasies and dreams of tough-guy wish fulfillment which would make even Mickey Spillane jealous.

There is a bit of the best and a bit of the worst in this new novel with the lurid title, *Rape of Honor*. In its representation of the modern, post-war German scene it is as accurate and incisive as anything yet written. Speaking through his hero, Rupert Kruedner, Heinrich makes some devastating comments on Teutonic folkways: "Rupert noticed a small commotion on the sidewalk. An American Army wife, a Negro, had left her baby carriage

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outside the pastry snop next to the store. More than half a dozen women had gathered around the baby, cooing enthusiastically; the sentiment spread like a small epidemic, and even those who were hurrying by stopped for an instant to smile. Perhaps those were the ones who slammed the door in the faces of Negro students. Little cats too grow up into big cats—poor little cats."

To a man, Heinrich's heroes—Steiner of *Cross of Iron,* Kolodzi of *Crack of Doom,* Bucholz of *Mark of Shame*—have been men alienated from their society by character or circumstance; all too are castrated by that society, rendered impotent by its awful force. Each acts out the author's feeling of helplessness as he is caught in the oligarchical rat-trap of German society. And so it is with Rupert Kruedner in *Rape of Honor.* He is caught in the trap, forced to desert his medical studies and take a job as chauffeur to the wife of a wealthy Mannheim industrialist. Her demands, as suggested in the title, become somewhat less than honorable.

Heidelberg is the setting for this calculated assault on the robber-baron industrialists who rule in Germany today. There is a hint of irony in Heinrich's choice of the picture-book city as the background to this story of sexual perversion and moral degradation—but this hint of irony is the closest thing to humor in the book. Willi Heinrich's characteristic attitude is one of suppressed rage. He is probably the angriest young man in Germany today.

It is this anger that distinguishes Heinrich from the other German writers who have appeared since the war and tempts us to overestimate the value of his work. Though he is widely translated and well known throughout the rest of Europe and America, he is quite unpopular in his own country. It is easy to see why. No other writer has been less compromising in placing the blame for the Nazis' misdeeds squarely on the shoulders of the German people. Nor has any other been more contemptuous of the economic "miracle"; he regards it as no more than a symptom of his nation's post-war *Krankheit.*

A Little Lobectomy

IF THINE EYE OFFEND THEE. By Heinrich Schirmbeck. Simon & Schuster. $5.95.

By WILLIAM DUNLEA

HEINRICH SCHIRMBECK grapples fearlessly with some of the burning issues of the day but proves unequal to the problem of their transposition to the context of the novel. Judging by this effort, Mr. Schirmbeck is one of those thinkers who know how to write and who find it expedient to novelize their ideas chiefly because nobody reads philosophy anymore; today we *don't hold that a good novel* must inform, but we do expect a good *Weltanschauung* to be entertaining.

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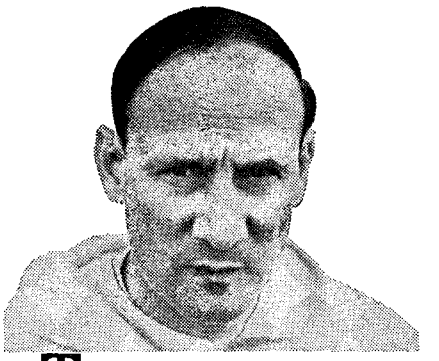

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As is customary for an intellectual storming the novel, Mr. Schirmbeck generalizes when he should particularize; there results the usual maddening discrepancy between the refulgent display of intelligence and the inexpert handling of the medium; integrity of mind must keep constant company with duplicity of matter. Mr. Schirmbeck takes for granted the indulgence of his thinking readers while he follows a narrative line which is patently designed to titillate the unthinking philistines.

One must admire, nevertheless, the consistency with which the characters have met the author's rigorous intellectual requirements; there isn't one of them wanting fluency on such matters as magnetic fields, helium protons and the castration of souls. Participating in these extemporizings are a young cyberneticist with a hapless passion for girls who suffer from hysterical blindness; a young woman who is thus afflicted: a weird goddess of neo-primitive dance; a nuclear physicist with a highly vocal conscience; the blind girl's father, a Christian heresiarch whose followers preach ascesis; a Mephistophelian officer of the O.S.I.; a female Machiavelli who practically runs a defense ministry singlehanded; and her son, a poet somewhat more bemused than the rest.

Generalization is compounded by vagueness when it is a question of the backgrounds of these people. The cyberneticist is named Thomas Grey though he is French; the other French personages also usually have un-French names, the Germans have French names and are called Armagnacs, Paris is Sybaris, the Americans are referred to as Anglo-Saxons, and so it goes. This is just as well, no doubt, for the characters are too unreal to hold their own against a real background; it isn't strange that in describing them the author gives way to such phrasing as: "There was something like despair lurking at the corners of her mouth," and is able to find malice, melancholy and martydom in a single smile. The exasperating thing is that such unconvincing characters should speak such credible a urgent words.

The Prince de Bary, the physici whose life model is the Duc Broglie, voices a forceful denunc tion of the "Pontius Pilate" attitu of science; he believes a stro pathological tendency and de spiritual decay underlie the cc temporary pursuit of nuclear s ence. "The path from the cipher representation of the outer wo to the very roots of the "I" reve itself as a magic circle coiling ba upon itself. . . . Though it w Parsifal who set out upon t journey it is Cain who returnec

The scientists rejoice that all th have done is to make war obsole and assure us, while going on wi their dark research, that we ne only be guided by reason; and their great prescience they have pr vided against the breakdown of o mortal powers in this respect: sur ly a little electronic surgery, lobectomy perhaps—such as is a tempted on the brain of a recalc trant de Bary to relieve him of h anti-social metaphysics — wou prove efficacious; indeed the bene icences of a scientific peace co found all measure. There are, random, the delightful possibiliti of cybernetica: "For the cybernet cist the era of creative evolution closed"; in that the process of a celeration has here reached fatalist proportions, this statement seen chillingly accurate. This would ap pear, then, to be the most egocei tric of sciences, the final iron triumph of egoism and the will power in science.

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REVIEWERS

Richard Gilman, a regular contribut to these pages, writes for a number publications.

Alice Ellen Mayhew is on the sta of a well-known New York publishir house.

Wilfrid Sheed, author of the recent published novel, *A Middle Class Educ tion*, has long been interested in movi and their critics.

Bruce A. Cook has a special intere in modern German literature, abou which he has frequently written.

William Dunlea, a regular contribut to these pages, is a New York critic an writer.

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Commonweal Associates

This spring's roll of Commonweal Associates has now passed the hundred mark, and the list of memberships and contributions is still growing. We are most grateful for this substantial interest and assistance on the part of our readers. By April 14 the following had enrolled as Charter or Sustaining Members of the Associates for 1961:

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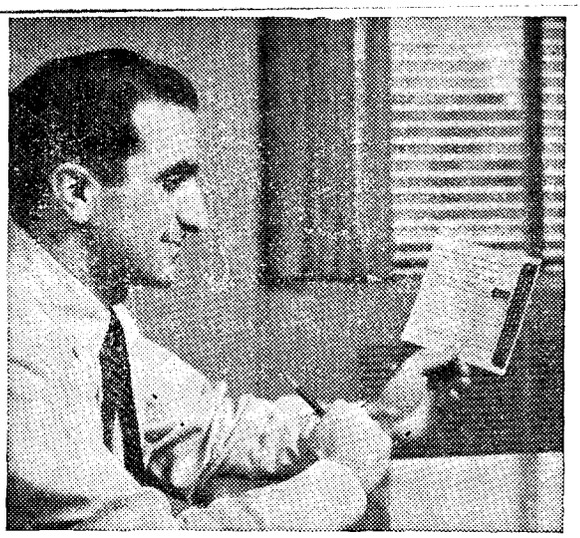

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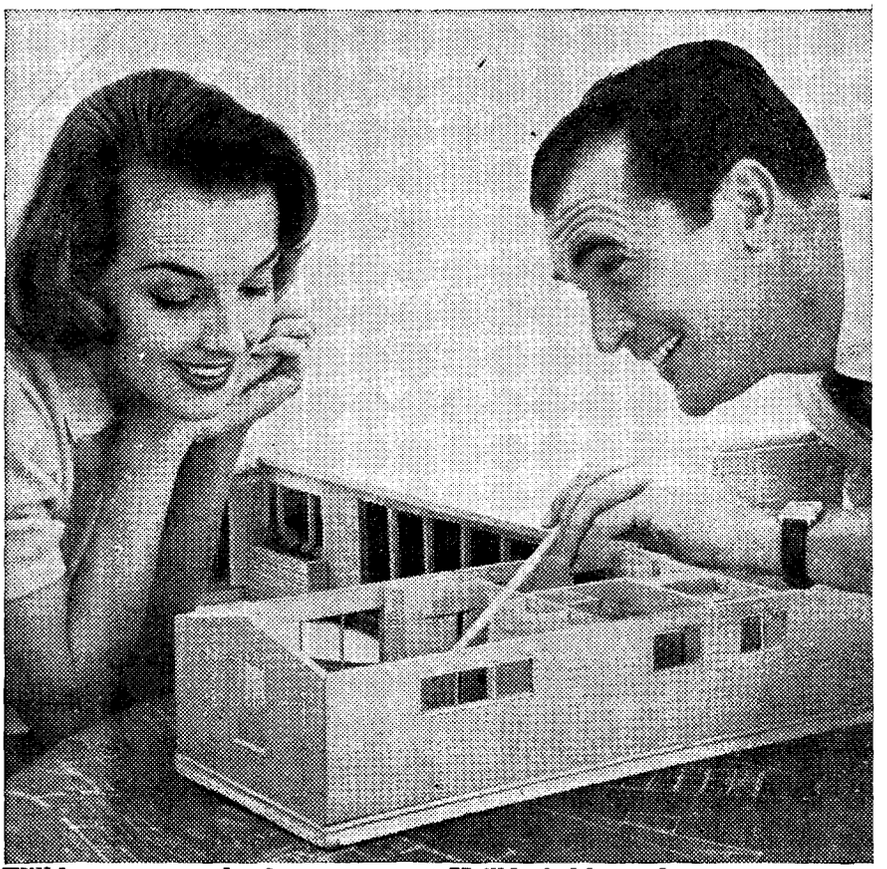

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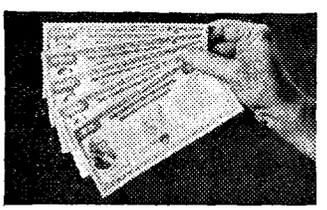

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